



**the ORLA
newsletter.**

SEPTEMBER 2025

LIBRARY HALL
PRESENTS

THE
GATSBY
BALL

WHAT WE'RE READING



SERIES

THE EXPANSE



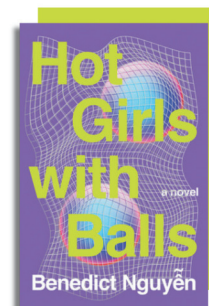
JAMES S. A. COREY

Humanity has colonized the solar system--Mars, the Moon, the Asteroid Belt & beyond – but the stars are still out of our reach. Jim Holden is XO of an ice miner making runs from the rings of Saturn to the mining stations of the Belt. When he & his crew stumble upon a derelict ship, the Scopuli, they find themselves in possession of a secret they never wanted. A secret that someone is willing to kill for – & kill on a scale unfathomable to Jim & his crew. War is brewing in the system unless he can find out who left the ship & why. Detective Miller is looking for a girl. One girl in a system of billions, but her parents have money, & money talks. When the trail leads him to the Scopuli & rebel sympathizer Holden, he realizes that this girl may be the key to everything. Holden & Miller must thread the needle between the Earth government, the Outer Planet revolutionaries, & secretive corporations – & the odds are against them. But out in the Belt, the rules are different, & one small ship can change the fate of the universe.

"I really enjoyed this sci-fi series from start to finish. Given the setting, there are definitely technological aspects woven throughout, but the highlight of the story is found through the characters. I prefer space operas more so than tech-heavy sci-fi, which boded well for me here. Readers will become engrossed in the individual character arcs of each member of the Rocinante as they band together to help save humanity from the mysterious spread of an extra-terrestrial protomolecule &, of course, each other." Dan Flaherty, Oil Region Library Association

★★★★☆ HOT GIRLS WITH BALLS

BENEDICT NGUYỄN



Six is 6'7", scheming to rejoin the starting lineup, & barely checks her phone. Green is 6'1", always building her brand, & secretly jealous of her more famous girlfriend. Together, they're going where no Asian American trans woman has gone before: the men's pro indoor volleyball league. Between their rival teams' away games across the globe, Six & Green stay connected on SpaceTime & selflessly broadcast their romance to fans on their weekly Instagram live show. After a long season, they'll finally reunite for the championship tournament, the first to accommodate in-person fans since the COVIS pandemic struck the world a year ago. Just as they enter an airtight bro bubble of the world's best, they're faced with a crisis that demands an indisputably humiliating task: make a public statement online. Can Green stock up enough clout for her post-ball future? Can Six girlboss her team's seniority politics? Can they both take a time-out to just grieve? Their rabid fans & horny haters await their next move. We're all just desperate for a whiff of the sweaty feminine energy that makes that ball thwack with such spectacular force.

"I wish I enjoyed this more than I did. I appreciate the point and the commentary on stars/influencers and their relationship with the public. It's unfortunate, but the formatting is what knocked this down a few stars for me." Emily Antkowiak, Oil City Library

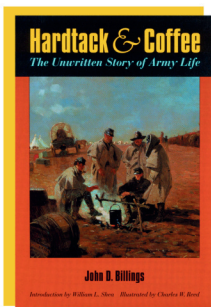
HARDTACK & COFFEE ★★★★★

OR, THE UNWRITTEN STORY OF ARMY LIFE

JOHN D. BILLINGS

Most histories of the Civil War focus on battles & top brass. *Hardtack & Coffee* is one of the few to give a vivid, detailed picture of what ordinary soldiers endured every day--in camp, on the march, at the edge of a booming, smoking hell. John D. Billings of Massachusetts enlisted in the Army of the Potomac & survived the conditions he recorded. The authenticity of his book is heightened by the many drawings that a comrade, Charles W. Reed, made in the field. This is the story of how the Civil War soldier was recruited, provisioned, & disciplined. Described here are the types of men found in any outfit; their not very uniform uniforms; crowded tents & makeshift shelters; difficulties in keeping clean, warm, & dry; their pleasure in a cup of coffee; food rations, dominated by salt pork & the versatile cracker or hardtack; their brave pastimes in the face of death; punishments for various offenses; treatment in sick bay; firearms & signals, & modes of transportation. Comprehensive & anecdotal, *Hardtack & Coffee* is striking for the pulse of life that runs through it.

"Most Civil War books take a broad view & talk about the battles or the reasons behind them, or even the economic & cultural effects it had on our country. All of this is good, but I've found very few that focus on the day-to-day life of the people that aren't sensationalized into fiction or are incredibly dry. Billings' book is an exception. It follows the day-to-day life & concerns of a Union soldier entertainingly & plainly. Billings is more telling a story than writing a book, & it comes across in his words. The numerous illustrations also make it a fun read. Anyone who has a passing interest in the Civil War, or just American history in general, would find it entertaining." Amanda Barker, Franklin & Cooperstown Public Libraries



SPEAK FREELY

A POETRY NIGHT OF BANNED BOOKS

THURS. OCTOBER 9

5:30 - 7:30 PM



OIL CITY LIBRARY HALL

DOORS OPEN AT 5PM

Join us during Banned Books Week (October 5-11, 2025) for an evening of powerful poetry readings from banned & challenged books. *Speak Freely* will bring together educators, students, writers, & community members to celebrate the right to read & uplift voices that have been silenced. The program will feature selected readings, short introductions to each poem, complimentary refreshments, & a closing reflection period where the community can share responses & favorite lines. This program is free to attend and is open to teens & adults!



SEPTEMBER 24 | 5:30PM | OIL CITY LIBRARY

Join us for a cozy Stuffed Animal Sleepover at the Oil City Library on **Wednesday, September 24th at 5:30PM!** We'll kick off the evening with a fun Storytime, followed by a special activity where kids can create their very own lion stuffie to take home. **Don't forget to bring a stuffed animal from home—after Storytime, it will get to stay overnight at the library with all the other stuffies for a sleepover!** Come back the next day to pick up your stuffed friend and see what adventures they had while you were away.

There are limited spots for this program, so make sure to stop in or call the Oil City Library at (814) 678-3072 to register!



MAKE YOUR OWN LION STUFFIE!

SPONSORED BY THE BELLES LETTRES CLUB OF OIL CITY



PICTURE THIS

WRITTEN AND
CREATED BY

EMILY ANTKOWIAK

Each month, I take one historical image & photograph it superimposed over the same area as it appears today. This allows you to see what Venango County looked like in the past with a modern reference. My hope is to share neat photos from the library's archives to make them and their history more attainable.



The Eager Beaver IGA Foodliner held its grand opening on October 6, 1965. In each month for the remainder of that year, the market awarded a new Volkswagen and 2 RCA TVs to lucky winners. Located on State Street in Oil City, this location should look very familiar, as the Family Dollar uses this building today.

NOW



THEN

Do you have an image or location you'd like to see featured?
Email eantkowiak@oilregionlibraries.org with your suggestions!



Libby.
The library reading app



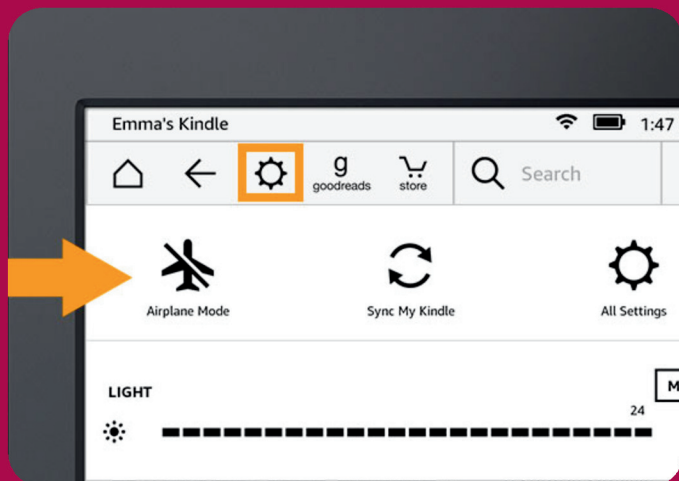
TIP OF THE MONTH

Airplane Mode

Even with an extended checkout period, it can still feel like there's never enough time to finish everything! Books often seem to come off hold all at once, which can make it a scramble to keep up with reading.

For Kindle users, a handy trick is to switch your device to **Airplane Mode**. This way, the title will stay on your Kindle until it reconnects to WiFi, even though it's been returned electronically and made available for the next reader.

It's a win-win for everyone!



Next Month's **BOOK CLUB** Selections

OCTOBER 2025

Oil City Library Book Club

Oil City Library

Meets First Thursday
of the Month at 10:30 AM



Yesternight
Cat Winters



The Bookmarkers Book Club

Franklin Public Library

Meets Second Tuesday
of the Month at 12:00 PM

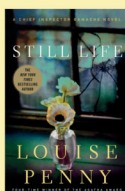


FREE BOOK!
Read Whatever
You'd Like This
Month

Thursday Evening Book Club

Franklin Public Library

Meets Third Thursday
of the Month at 5:00 PM



Still Life
Louise Penny



Hometown Hype Opens ORLA Online Merch Store

Hometown Hype, the Franklin-based custom apparel & fundraiser platform, has unveiled a new online storefront, partnering with ORLA to bring supporters a line of library-branded merchandise. The new collection is now live & ready for supporters to browse & order at Hometown Hype's website.

As part of Hometown Hype's "Spirit Wear Stores," the storefront offers a seamless fundraising experience—no more clunky paper order forms. Instead, community members can easily shop, pay online, & feel good knowing that their purchases support a beloved local institution.

Select your desired size & quantity, complete the fast checkout, & your order will ship directly to you—or be available for pickup locally in Franklin!



SHOP NOW

**HOMETOWN
HYPE**
CUSTOM APPAREL
FRANKLIN, PA

hometownhype.org/collections/oil-region-library-association



A SWIFTIE SOCIAL

27
SEP

STARTING
AT NOON

@ the Oil City Library

DROP IN FROM 12:00PM - 2:00PM

FREE TO ATTEND!

SWIFTIE ACTIVITIES

- ★ FRIENDSHIP BRACELETS
- ★ DIY HEADRESSES
- ★ TAYLOR SWIFT MUSIC
- ★ TAYLOR PHOTO OP



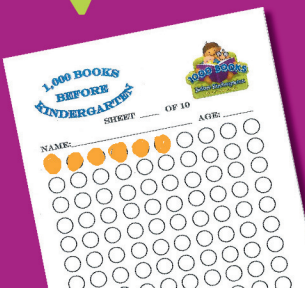
TAYLOR TRIVIA

STARTS AT 2:00PM
FOR AGES 10-18

CHANCE TO WIN A VINYL
COPY OF *THE LIFE OF A
SHOWGIRL*



Keep track of the
books you read with
the library's easy
color-the-shapes log!



Franklin Public Library

QUILT-A-THON

FRIDAY, SEPT. 12 | 10-6PM

+

SATURDAY, SEPT. 13 | 10-3PM

The Friends of the Franklin Public Library will be hosting their 30th annual Quilt-A-Thon fundraising event on September 12th & 13th during the Franklin Public Library's regular business hours - Friday 10-6PM & Saturday 10-3PM.

During this interactive event, volunteer quilters will demonstrate the craft on two projects. Sherry Bastecki of *The Flying Needles* made a quilt top entitled "Blooming Butterflies," and Krista Cloonan & Susan Betz, of *The Polk Quilters*, made an "Inspired by Johnny Appleseed" quilt top. Both are currently on display in the Franklin Public Library. Any level of quilter may participate for any length of time. Each quilter is asked to gather sponsorships at \$5 each or \$20/5 chances to win one of the completed quilts (see below). The winning sponsors are decided by a drawing on October 6th.



No experience is necessary to come & participate. Walk-in volunteers are encouraged to join the fun. There will also be a small consignment shop of quilted & crafted items for sale, with 10% of those proceeds to benefit the library. Those interested in getting sponsors can pick up information at the library's circulation desk or call (814) 432-5062.



These readers
hit milestones
last month!



Why Participate?

There's no better time to lay the groundwork for independent learning than early childhood. Reading 1,000 books before kindergarten is a low pressure way to close the vocabulary gap & develop the early literacy skills so crucial to success in school. Any child can participate as long as they are not yet in kindergarten.

Register your child in person at your library or online at www.oilregionlibraries.org/youth/1000-books-before-kindergarten/

LIBRARY HALL

Nearing Completion

Carnegie Theater to Officially Open in 2026

For the past 7 months, Perry Construction has been restoring Library Hall, the historic theater on the 2nd floor of the Oil City Library. Finishing touches on the floor, bathrooms & lighting are being made & the space will be ready for private bookings in 2026. We're so excited to hold our first official event, *The Gatsby Ball*, in the space later this month! A rock concert, film showing & opera performance are also slated for this Fall in the space.



Perry Construction crew members finish the last of the renovations on Library Hall, the historic theater on the 2nd floor of the Oil City Library.



Enormous sliding barn doors hide the catering space at the rear of the hall.



The catering space behind the sliding barn doors in the rear of the hall features a sink, mini fridge & counter space to accommodate events like wedding receptions, reunions, parties & other gatherings.



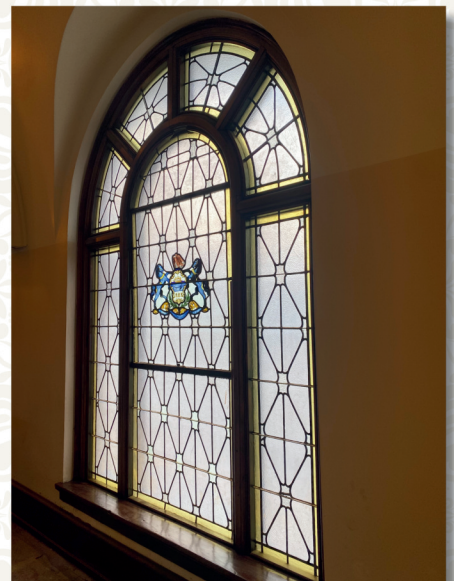
Original hardwood flooring has been sanded, stained & varnished.



Light bulbs line the ceiling arches, stretching the width of the hall, leading to the stage.



Wall sconces, with original plaster designs (coming soon!), sit at the bottom of the ceiling arches.



Original stained glass windows and trim are restored to their original glory.

LIBRARY HALL PRESENTS

THE GATSBY BALL

SAT. SEPTEMBER 20 | 7 PM - 10:30 PM
AT THE OIL CITY LIBRARY

Join us for a Great Gatsby-inspired evening with curated drinks, hors d'oeuvres, gambling, 1920s music & more in the library's historic, newly restored theater! 1920s attire is required.

\$100

LUXURY
ADMISSION

- 6:00 PM access to Speakeasy
- 10 Special Tokens

\$75

GENERAL
ADMISSION

- 5 Special Tokens

Use tokens for drinks, gambling, silent auction, shoe shining, ostrich headbands, & more! Additional tokens may be purchased at event.

TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

at the Oil City Library & Franklin Public Library

- LIMITED TICKETS AVAILABLE -

SPONSORED BY

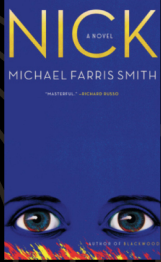


THE GREAT GATSBY

READ-A-LIKES

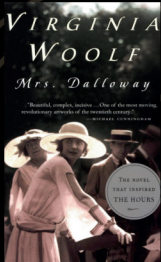
Love 'The Great Gatsby' & looking for similar reads?

These titles carry the same spirit of glamour, longing, & reinvention. Some connect directly to Fitzgerald's world, while others explore the glitter & shadows of high society. Some take those themes further, delving into art, destiny, & the extraordinary people who change our lives. Check out these titles at any ORLA location!



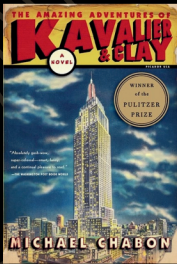
Nick MICHAEL FARRIS SMITH

In this haunting prequel to *The Great Gatsby*, Michael Farris Smith imagines the untold backstory of Nick Carraway. Before he became Gatsby's confidant, Nick endured the horrors of World War I & sought meaning in a fractured, postwar world. His journey through Paris & New Orleans reveals the scars he carries & the yearning that ultimately drives him east to Long Island, where he will one day meet Gatsby.



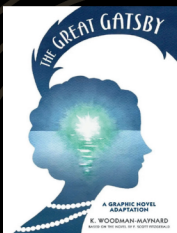
Mrs. Dalloway VIRGINIA WOOLF

Virginia Woolf's modernist classic unfolds over a single June day in post-World War I London. As Clarissa Dalloway prepares for an evening party, she reflects on her youth, choices, & the passage of time. Interwoven with her story is that of Septimus Warren Smith, a veteran struggling with shell shock. Through their parallel experiences, Woolf explores memory, identity, & the fragility of human connection.



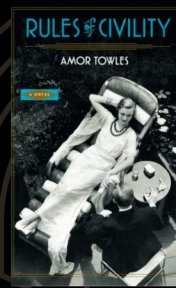
The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay MICHAEL CHABON

Spanning decades, this Pulitzer Prize-winning novel follows cousins Joe Kavalier & Sammy Clay as they create a beloved comic book hero during the golden age of comics in 1930s & 40s New York. Joe, a talented artist who escaped Nazi-occupied Prague, & Sammy, a witty Brooklyn-born writer, pour their hopes & fears into their creation. Their intertwined lives explore themes of love, exile, artistic expression, & the power of storytelling.



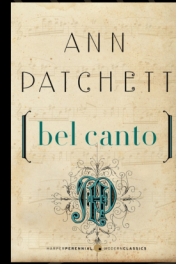
The Great Gatsby: a Graphic Novel Adaptation K. WOODMAN-MAYNARD

This vibrant graphic novel adaptation brings new life to F. Scott Fitzgerald's Jazz Age masterpiece. Through expressive illustrations, readers experience the grandeur of Gatsby's parties, the allure of wealth & glamour, & the devastating consequences of obsession & lost love. A faithful yet fresh retelling, it captures the timeless themes of longing, illusion, & the pursuit of the American Dream.



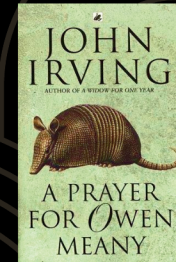
Rules of Civility AMOR TOWLES

Set against the glittering backdrop of 1938 Manhattan, this elegant novel follows 25-year-old Katey Kontent as she navigates the city's social ladders. When a chance encounter at a jazz club propels her into the orbit of wealth & privilege, Katey must decide what she values most — ambition, romance, or independence. With wit & charm, Amor Towles captures both the allure & the illusions of high society.



Bel Canto ANN PATCHETT

When a world-renowned soprano performs at a birthday party in South America, the evening is upended by a group of armed insurgents who storm the house & take everyone hostage. As days stretch into weeks, unexpected relationships form among captives & captors alike. Patchett's lyrical novel blends tension & tenderness, asking how art, beauty, & compassion can flourish in even the direst circumstances.



A Prayer for Owen Meany JOHN IRVING

Told through the eyes of John Wheelwright, this unforgettable story centers on his best friend, Owen Meany—a small boy with a peculiar voice, unshakable faith, & a conviction that he is God's instrument. Set in New England during the 1950s & 60s, the novel explores friendship, belief, & destiny, weaving humor & heartbreak into a meditation on doubt, faith, & sacrifice.



ALSO AVAILABLE ON LIBBY



2025 ANNUAL
OIL REGION LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

LIBRARY LOTT

2026 tickets will be
available soon!

EACH TICKET
\$20
ONLY 1000 SOLD

AUGUST WINNERS!

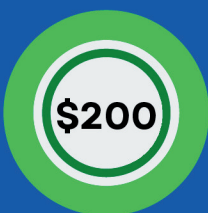


NO WINNER

THIS COULD BE YOU NEXT
MONTH! GET YOUR TICKET
TODAY AT YOUR LIBRARY!



BRADFORD W.
FRANKLIN, PA



BRAD H.
WEXFORD, PA

A total of 36 winners will be
determined by the **Pennsylvania**
Daily Pick 3 evening drawing at
7:00PM on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd days
of each month in 2025.

DOG PARTY!

AT THE
FRANKLIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

CELEBRATE OUR
FURRY FRIENDS!

THERAPY DOGS
DOG BONE SCAVENGER HUNT
DOG CRAFT
TREATS
DOG BARK CONTEST

SEPT. 20 | 11AM

FREE TO ATTEND & NO
REGISTRATION REQUIRED

SPOOKY POP-OUT FRAME

Getting into the Fall spirit? Join us at our next Craft
Night with Terrie at Franklin & Cooperstown libraries
to make your very own Spooky Pop-Out Frame!
Participating is free & all materials are provided.

Cooperstown Public Library
Monday, September 15 | 5:00 - 7:00PM

Franklin Public Library
Friday, September 26 | 4:00 - 6:00PM

Spots Are Limited – call or stop by your library to register!

Vote YES

for libraries

on November 4th, 2025.

WHY VOTE YES?



Our libraries are underfunded. **1 in 4 Venango County residents pay out-of-pocket** to use them.



If the referendum fails, **libraries will face cuts or closures.**



The referendum proposes a small tax—**just \$12.50 per year for a \$50,000 assessed property.**



This will give **ALL** residents equal access to **ALL** library services.



It ensures **reliable funding**, helps us qualify for **more state aid**, & **protects our library resources.**



Libraries support job seekers, students, seniors, & families—and **strengthen our entire community.**



Investing in library services ensures **residents remain engaged in the community & helps safeguard property values.**



Even if you don't use the library now, **it will be there when you need it.**

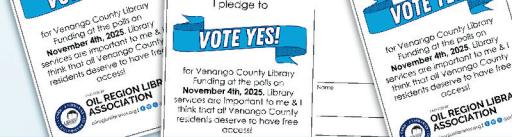
BECAUSE OUR LIBRARIES ARE FOR EVERYONE

Learn more at oilregionlibraries.org/vote-yes

Vote YES

for libraries on November 4th, 2025.

Learn more at oilregionlibraries.org/vote-yes



Our **VOTE YES!** library referendum campaign is making steady progress as we continue to spread the word about our mission & the vital role libraries play in the community. We'll soon be sharing important information on library usage, relevance, & impact to ensure the public understands just how essential these resources are. Thank you to all the volunteers who have generously given their time & energy to help move this campaign forward!



Yard Signs & Buttons are here!

Want to help us spread the word about voting **YES!** for libraries on November 4th? Yard signs & buttons are available NOW to pick up at your local library. Ask at the front desk & a staff member will provide you with any materials you'd like to take, including campaign literature & pledge postcards!



ADULT
CRAFT
CLUB

Fall 2025



Canning Ring Sunflowers

September 15

5:00PM

OIL CITY LIBRARY

September 17

4:00PM | FRANKLIN
PUBLIC LIBRARY

September 17

5:00PM

OIL CITY LIBRARY

at Oil City & Franklin Libraries!

Adult Craft Club is BACK for Fall 2025! We can't wait to see you for more crafting fun! This September, we will be making Canning Ring Sunflowers. Adult Craft Club is free to attend & all materials will be provided. Sessions will continue to be offered at both the Oil City Library and the Franklin Public Library.

Registration is OPEN NOW! Franklin programs are held at 4:00PM & Oil City programs are held at 5:00PM. Visit or call the Franklin Public Library (814-432-5062) or the Oil City Library (814-678-3072) to register today!

FEATURED RESOURCES




libby
The library reading app.

Popular Now 

GALE COURSES

GALE Courses offers a wide range of highly interactive, instructor-led courses that you can take entirely online. As a library card holder in good standing, you are entitled to these courses at no cost. Courses run for 6 weeks & new sessions begin every month.



MONSTERS + aliens

Horror, Sci-Fi, & Zombie films to watch on

kanopy




Oil City Library

2 Central Ave.
Oil City, PA 16301
(814) 678-3072

Monday	9:00am-7:30pm
Tuesday	9:00am-7:30pm
Wednesday	9:00am-7:30pm
Thursday	9:00am-5:00pm
Friday	9:00am-5:00pm
Saturday	9:00am-3:00pm
Sunday	CLOSED

Franklin Public Library

421 12th St.
Franklin, PA 16323
(814) 432-5062

Monday	10:00am-6:00pm
Tuesday	10:00am-6:00pm
Wednesday	10:00am-6:00pm
Thursday	10:00am-6:00pm
Friday	10:00am-6:00pm
Saturday	10:00am-3:00pm
Sunday	CLOSED

Cooperstown Public Library

182 N. Main St.
Cooperstown, PA 16317
(814) 374-4605

Monday	12:00pm-6:00pm
Tuesday	12:00pm-6:00pm
Wednesday	CLOSED
Thursday	12:00pm-6:00pm
Friday	12:00pm-6:00pm
Saturday	CLOSED
Sunday	CLOSED

FIND US ONLINE

oilregionlibraries.org



Libby, GALE Courses & Kanopy are available to you for FREE with your library card at oilregionlibraries.org



@ortalibraries